Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1.   **(Currently Amended)** A payment system for making an electronic payment by a user to a provider via an electronic interface, the system comprising:

    a.   an input device for receiving user data and a requested transaction;

    b.   ~~a transmitting network for transmitting the user data and the requested transaction~~ a receiver processing computer system removed from and external to the input device, said receiver processing system configured to receive the user data and the transaction;

    c.   ~~a receiver processing system for receiving the user data and the transaction~~ a transmitting network external to the input device and linking the input device to the receiver processing system, the transmitting network disposed for transmitting the user data and the requested transaction from the input device to the receiver processing system;

    d.   the receiver processing **computer** system **programmed to** ~~further including an authentication system for~~ authenticat**ing** the user and the transaction, approv**ing** **or** **disapprove** the transaction and initiat**ing** completion of the transaction **based on approval and** in accordance with criteria established by the user.

2.   **(Original)** The payment system of claim 1, wherein the input device is a point-of-sale terminal.

3.   **(Original)** The payment system of claim 1, wherein the input device is an ATM/POS terminal.

4.   **(Original)** The payment system of claim 2, further including a payment transaction gateway and wherein the receiver processing system is adapted for communicating with the payment transaction gateway to receive authenticated user requests.

5.   **(Original)** The payment system of claim 3, further including a payment transaction gateway and wherein the receiver processing system is adapted for communicating with the payment transaction gateway to receive authenticated user requests.

6.   **(Original)** The payment system of claim 1, wherein the input device is connected to the receiver processing system via the Internet.

7.   **(Original)** The payment system of claim 1, further including at least one financial institution adapted for communicating with the receiver processing system and wherein the requested transaction is completed through the financial institution in accordance with criteria set by the user and managed by the receiver processing system.

8.   **(Currently Amended)** The payment system of claim 1, wherein the receiver processing system is adapted for communicating with the Federal Reserve Automatic Clearing House (ACH) system ~~and the authenticated transaction is completed by transferring funds via the ACH system~~.

9.   **(Currently Amended)** A method for ~~making~~ <u>processing</u> an electronic payment comprising the steps of:

    a.   establishing authenticating criteria for a user;

    b.   entering user data via an input device;

    c.   entering a requested transaction at the input device;

    d.   transmitting the user data and the transaction to a processing system;

    e.   authenticating the user;

    f.   completing the transaction in accordance with pre-established criteria controlled by the user.

10.   **(Original)** The method of claim 9, wherein the pre-established criteria includes establishing a hierarchy for selecting completion of the transaction from a plurality of user controlled accounts.

11.   **(Original)** The method of claim 9, wherein the transaction is completed via the Federal Reserve Automatic Clearing House (ACH) regardless of the input device.

12.   **(New)** A method for processing an electronic payment, said method comprising the steps of:

    a.   establishing a user account ,which user account includes payment criteria selected by the user controlling the payment of a transaction from one or more financial institutions and storing the user selected payment criteria on a remote processing computer system;

    b.   providing a user with an authentication card, wherein said authentication card contains authenticating criteria for a user;

    c.   entering user authentication criteria from said card via an input device;

    d.   entering a payment requested at the input device;

    e.   following input of the authentication criteria and payment request at an input device, transmitting the authentication criteria and payment request over an external communications network to the remote processing computer system;

    f.   utilizing the remote processing computer system to authenticate the user;

    g.   following authentication of a user, utilizing the pre-selected payment criteria to identifying one or more financial institutions for payment of the payment request;

    h.   utilizing the remote processing computer system to communicate with the identified financial institutions to determine if the total funds for the payment request are available; and

    i.   in the event of availability of funds, utilizing the remote processing computer system to initiate payment of funds from the identified financial institutions via the Federal Reserve Automatic Clearing House (ACH) system.